

MEDIA RELEASE

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Council takes steps to boost region's recognition as a welcoming city

Gladstone Regional Council is taking steps to become widely known as a welcoming region where people from all backgrounds have equal opportunity to take part in all aspects of the community.

Gladstone Region Councillor Natalia Muszkat said Council had joined the Welcoming Cities Network, alongside 31 local councils and governments across Australia and was now working towards accreditation.

"Council is committed to ensuring its policies, programs and services are inclusive for all," Councillor Muszkat said.

"All residents across our region, regardless of cultural background, should feel a sense of belonging so they can actively participate in and contribute to community life."

The Gladstone Region has a high level of cultural diversity with 2016 census data recording that 14.4 per cent of the region's population were born overseas.

"Cultural diversity adds a rich vibrancy to communities with the ability to influence art, food and liveability through to providing greater economic opportunities and access to domestic and international markets," Cr Muszkat said.

'Aligning with Welcoming Cities' vision, Council will be able to further embrace diversity, foster social cohesion and enhance our region's multicultural focus.

"Council already has initiatives in place that will contribute to achieving accreditation such as our Saiki Sister City Initiative and Acknowledgment to Country and Welcome to Country practices at Council and Council sponsored events."

Cr Muszkat said registering as a Welcoming City would enable Council to align with best practice multiculturalism and ensure the organisation was at the forefront of igniting multicultural inclusiveness and growth.

"Council will be able to tap into shared learning and resources, benchmark its cultural diversity and inclusion policies, programs and initiatives, identify future improvements required and assess progress over time," she said.